



Volume 2017 | Issue 39

Article 30

7-15-2017

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Trent Walters

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Recommended Citation

Walters, Trent (2017) "*Moonstory Poems*," *The Mythic Circle*: Vol. 2017 : Iss. 39 , Article 30.

Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/mcircle/vol2017/iss39/30>

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4.

O sacred oracle! O beacon of the age!

To you the Mystery is unveiled in the
secret womb of the Mothers. In your innermost

depths—at the threshold of transfiguration—
a strange, new world labors to be born.

Moonstory Poems

by

Trent Walters

The Moon Wages War against War

As ad infinitum, two human
old women, sick
of the all's-fair-in cosmic
rows in heaven, root up enough

carrot and turnip roots
to burrow out of the martial din
of winged shields, pitch-
forks, long knives, and tin-pot

helmets; to burrow from their home's den
out a hole in the holy clouds and climb
through
on knotted bedsheets with their child,
the Moon—born of star-faring

seamen, launching falling
stars at one another across the heavens.
The child, bundled in bedsheets,
sleeps safe in motherly arms, cradled

as though she were a candle wan.
They erect teepees and warm milk.

The seamen sent salmon
to steal the Moon when her blind
grandmothers weren't looking. She grew
among cattails and catfish, accounting for

certain tastes, and as she aged,
the celestial salmon enticed her, promised
the finest glittering jewels in the heavens,
so she followed those bad

salmon. When one let slip
that they intended steal her, she drove
the fish to market and traded them in
for love food, and money. She wandered

the world & found her dear, Deer
whom she immediately loved,
but he always wanted war, sharpened bones
into spears. So she transformed

Deer into a buck, & his spear-
bones into antlers & hooves.
His warrior chums she bewitched
into Stone, Duck, & Clam. She swam home

but paused near a calm
pool. A herd of elephants out-
crowded, stomped on
the hares. She said, "Leave

the hares to tipple, or go throw
your weight around elsewhere." The elephants
filled their trunks with water and fired
it at her. Being less serious and grave,

the Moon's water falls more slowly,
and she sidestepped easily. Knowing
greatness,
the elephants bowed & left. The hare
mouthed, "Elephant juice," and leaped

on her face where it laughs to this day
when she waxes full.

The Moon Accepts Gifts from a Twin-Faced Lover

She waxes so full figured, the Sun numbers
her lovelinesses, & she eyes his. He is
Seventh Heaven itself. Desire
flamed their prayers up for a union. Heaven

replies, "Raise your arms," and the Sun spreads
irrepressible orgasmic lightbeams into her
palms, and she burns, too, but too
late realizes the mistake. Her skin is singed

and bruised. "Stop!" she states. "I can't live
with you." But the Sun has eclipsed
in two: one rises on a halo,
the darker one glows with a murky light,

staggers after her, blindly walking on shafts
of beams. Heavenly one yells
to the Moon, "Accept this comb

& whetstone to protect you from
the Brujaja he's become." He lays her

back on Earth & the Brujaja half gives chase,
pursues to the earth's end. She drops
the whetstone, which throws

a mountain between them, but the Brujaja gnaws,
sharpening his hungry teeth on jagged cliffs
glinting in the sun. She drops the comb,
which throws up prickly

where we will only see
each other on the longest
day." She jumps to where
she is celestially secure

conifers between them, but the Brujaja
sets them ablaze. "Go
to the other end of heaven," shouts
Heaven, "where you'll be safe,

but cold & comfortless, where
she pines.

The Moon Accepts Gifts from a Familiar Stranger

She floats to a sandy shore & spies
a handsome man, with bright
eyes that pierce hers. As she gapes,
he asks with teeth glittering white, "Try

on these golden knee-highs." Shiny,
they are dated & right away, she suspects he is
the Sun, disguised as a shoe salesman. He slips
them on for her & clasps

her buckles tight. The boots burn
her feet; she screams & fumbles
with the buckles: "Take
them! Take them off!" But he

will not. She fades
into wisps of fog,
escapes, and swims
to rest upon a rocky shore.

The Moon Finds True Love at Last

Upon a pebbled beach stands a strange
hut. The Moon drags her bedraggled
body inside. She tidies up & at the crunch
of footsteps, changes into a spindle. Beat

from warring with the Sun, the Northern
Lights hangs his dappled hat—shifting green
to blue—upon the bear-skin door and sniffs
the air. He sniffs again, letting the smell

guide him toward his new spindle. He says,
“Lady, if you’re old, be my mom; my age,
sister; younger, wife.” “Wife,” she lies
and loves. But mornings when he flies at the Sun,

her loneliness lengthens into shadows. She sews
white stars on seal-black
skins & flings it over the windows.
Her husband stumbles home,

collapses on his mat, sleeps,
and bleary-eyed, gazes out
the window to see the dark, he falls
asleep believing until she throws the bear-

skin door up, triumphant: “It is noon,
and you’ve waged no battle!” The Sun
takes a ray and lances the Northern Lights
where he lies. She covers her face. Regolith leaks

between her fingers. She hovers over
her lover, says, “If you must kill, kill me!”
In rage, the Sun hurls both into the sky
but not together. She pines.

The Moon Finds That Persistent Love, If Less Than True, Lasts

She pines,
she pines,
she pines
for love, grows fat
for love, & drags the lakes
for love. Her rotund

belly opens valleys in her
search through Earth. A herdsman in disguise
rides reindeer over tundra. Woolly
Mammoth, kin to Elephants who never, uh,

remembers to, uh, forget to re-
member, warns him of the Moon's approach,
transforms the man to snow.
The Moon arrives, shoves aside

wooden reindeer, seeks under branches,
shoots, & leaves, but cannot find him.
She rages, snorts, contorts,
to no avail. "You nut!" she seems

to cry. She drives her sled
back up the curtain-black of night. He steers
his herd home to the tent
& curls into a womb of

warm blankets. Woolly Mammoth
awakes him, saying, "Moon returns! Allow me
to turn you into tent poles." "That's too obvious."
"A mole?" "Too dubious." "A foal?"

"Too ostentatious." "A rocky knoll?" He ruminates
before shaking his head: "Too smart
for us." "A shoal?" "Lugubrious." (He weeps
at deaths of salmon he has known & loved,

now filleted in markets.) “Then what?”
the Mammoth asks, exasperated.
“A lamp!” he decides
just as the Moon flings up the tent

flap. “Where’s he at?” she asks.
The mammoth gives a sheepish shrug.
She rummages the premises & overturns
big stones, stuffed ducks, & clams

big bones, racked antlers, ancient spears,
but he remains unfound. She leaves.
He pops his head out tent flaps:
“Hey, Lady, here I am!” She runs

inside & overturns old
stones, racked ducks, ancient clams,
old bones, stuffed antlers, & spears,
but he remains unfound. She leaves.

He pops his head out tent flaps:
“Hey, Lady, here I am!” She runs inside & overturns
a couple other things,
but she is weakened, thinned from

pursuit fatigue. He overpowers her
and trusses her, demands his space.
She lifts her face and acquiesces,
“Oh, whatever.” “Promise never

to chase me.” “Never.” He imagines
that he understands, unravels
her ties, and she is now
unleashed to prowl the heavens.